

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire pertaining to the introduction of S. 2962 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PIPELINE SAFETY EFFORTS

Mrs. Murray. Mr. President, I've come to the floor this evening to share with my colleagues recent developments on the pipeline safety legislation. I am frustrated that to date we've been unable to come to agreement on a package of amendments that would ensure this critical legislation passes this year. I praise the efforts of the chairman of the Commerce Committee, Senator MCCAIN, and the committee's ranking member, Senator HOLLINGS, for their steadfast resolution in dealing with this issue.

As most of my colleagues know, I've been working for more than a year to improve pipeline safety standards. Millions of miles of pipelines run through our communities, next to our schools and under our homes. As the deadly pipeline explosion in Bellingham, WA, on June 10, 1999, that killed 3 young boys, showed us, pipelines are not as safe as they could be.

Since the Bellingham explosion, I have been working with officials at all levels of government, industry representatives, environmentalists, state and federal regulators, and concerned citizens to identify ways to improve pipeline safety in our nation.

It has been an eye-opening experience. I've uncovered a history of loose regulation with insufficient safety standards, inadequately trained pipeline operators, and a public that is uninformed of the threat that exists.

To date, I have focused on the problems associated with liquid gas pipelines. The pipe that ruptured and resulted in the tragic deaths of the three young people in my state was a liquid pipeline. What most people don't know is that natural gas pipelines are far more deadly and injure many more people.

From 1986 to 1999, liquid pipeline accidents, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation, resulted in 35 deaths and 235 injuries. In contrast, natural gas distribution and transmission pipelines in that same time period have resulted in 296 deaths and injured 1,357 people. The property damage that has resulted from these incidence totals nearly \$1 billion.

Some examples of recent deadly natural gas pipelines include:

A 1998 natural gas explosion in St. Cloud, Minnesota that destroyed six buildings, killed four people and injured 14 others:

A 1997 Citizens Gas natural gas pipeline in Indianapolis that ruptured and ignited, destroying 6 homes and damaging 65 others properties. One person was tragically killed. Luckily this event occurred mid-day while many people were at work and school, otherwise it is likely that more fatalities would have occurred in that family neighborhood; and

A 1994 natural gas explosion in Allentown, Pennsylvania that killed one person and injured 66 others.

These are just three of many. Pipelines are dangerous, especially natural gas lines. We need to reform the system and put teeth in the regulation to ensure that these accidents are reduced dramatically.

The Office of Pipeline Safety oversees more than 157,000 miles of pipelines which transport hazardous liquids and more than 2.2 million miles of natural gas lines throughout the country. While these pipelines perform a vital service by bringing us the fuel we need to heat our homes and power our cars, they can also pose safety hazards.

That is why I introduced S. 2004, the Pipeline Safety Act of 2000, on January 27, 2000. In April, the administration and Senator MCCAIN, along with myself and Senator GORTON, also introduced alternative pipeline safety bills. All of these bills focus on expanding local input in pipeline safety matters and strengthening community "right to know" provisions, improving pipeline integrity and inspection practices, and increasing our research and development efforts.

On June 15, 2000, the Senate Commerce Committee discussed and deliberated the McCain-Murray-Gorton bill. As I stated before, this bill incorporates most of my priorities and is a positive step toward improving pipeline safety. The committee reported by bill without dissent.

Events since that time have proven less hopeful. Naturally, there were concerns with the bill as reported out of committee—and again—I appreciate the indulgence of the chair and ranking member as we have sought to negotiate through these difficult issues. Working with Senator GORTON and the Commerce Committee, we have come very close to compromise. Many issues have been resolved; there are only a few minor ones left.

I fear, however, that we may be coming to an impasse in our negotiations. I want my colleagues and the industry to know, I will not let the interests of the few strip the many of their right to safe communities.

Mr. President, the reforms we have called for are common sense measures. They will make our communities safer and allow everyone to enjoy the benefits of a modern pipeline infrastructure.

The reasons for delay are indefensible. I encourage my colleagues to consider what the stalling on this important issue could mean to communities in their State. It means, tragically, more unnecessary damage to life and property.

I knew this process would be difficult, but I am concerned at the point where we find ourselves today. If we can't accomplish this soon, I want my colleagues to know, I promise I will be creative in my approach to achieving meaningful pipeline safety legislation this year and find other ways to enact these extremely important reforms.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MISSOURI RIVER DAMS

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, this week my friend and colleague, Senator BOND, came to the floor to explain why he is seeking to stop much needed changes in the operation of the dams on the Missouri River which is so important to the culture and economy not only in my State but so many others.

For the past 10 years, the Army Corps of Engineers has been working to update the decades-old management policies for the Missouri River. That effort, conducted by scientists and professional river managers, is approaching fruition. This year the Fish and Wildlife Service has told the Corps that changes need to take place to restore this magnificent river to biological health and so that we may prevent the extinction of three endangered species. By doing so, we will not only bring environmental benefits to the river but also enhance the recreational use of the river, both upstream and, I might emphasize, downstream. Bringing about these needed management changes will mean the environment, public relations, and health of the river will all be winners.

But now my colleague from Missouri has inserted a rider, an anti-environmental measure, in the energy and water bill that would stop the Corps from changing the management of the river. I understand why my colleague from Missouri has done this. He is trying to protect the interests of the State. However, in the process, he would sacrifice a much larger upstream fish, wildlife, and recreation industry. I simply cannot let that go uncontested. Hence, we have been embroiled for now several days in a disagreement that I had hoped could be resolved.

Six major dams have been constructed on the Missouri River which have forever changed its flow and character.